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Testimony for Proposed Bills:

373 AN ACT CONCERNING STORAGE OF PERSONAL ITEMS OF EVICTED TENANTS.

5538 AN ACT ELIMINATING THE PROPERTY STORAGE MANDATE ON TOWNS REGARDING THE DISPOSITION AND STORAGE OF POSSESSIONS AND PERSONAL EFFECTS OF EVICTED TENANTS.

5871 AN ACT CONCERNING RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE DISPOSITION OF POSSESSIONS AND PERSONAL EFFECTS OF EVICTED TENANTS.

The Connecticut Apartment Association (CTAA) is the state chapter of the National Apartment Association and represents over 26,000 units, the largest number of apartments represented by any association in the state. CTAA members consist of the states leading firms in the multifamily rental housing industry. The association's mission is to provide quality rental housing to residents of Connecticut. Our parent organization, the National Apartment Association, represents more than 6 million apartment homes throughout the United States and Canada. The **Connecticut Apartment Association (CTAA)** is asking for the legislature's help and consideration in regards to proposed bills 373, 5538, and 5871 all of which remove the municipalities' requirement to store the property of evicted tenants. CTAA asks that if municipalities are not required to store the property of evicted tenants than property management companies and owners not be required to store them either.

Our organization understands the difficult economic conditions that are affecting our country, the state of Connecticut and our State's municipalities, as our industry is also affected. The CTAA is willing to work with the legislature in removing the burden from municipalities but asks that the changes be done in a way that is equitable to all parties.

As it stands now property management companies and owners in Connecticut already suffer prohibitively high costs when forced to evicting tenants. Property management companies and apartment owners, lose on average, three months of rent on each eviction. On top of this we bear the burden of attorney and court fees associated with each eviction. We also must cover the costs of repairing and cleaning an apartment often left in poor condition by evicted tenants. Property management companies and owners must also reimburse State Marshals for serving on average, three notices and inventorying any leftover property of evicted tenants. We then suffer the additional cost of hiring movers or maintenance crews to transfer evicted tenants' possessions to the curbside or municipal storage facilities.

Our organization would support the removal of the requirement of a municipality to store evicted tenants possessions if additional language was added requiring the property management company or owner to store the evicted tenant's possessions for 3 days after the final writ of execution is issued by the court, if the tenant still does not remove the property after 3 days then the management company or property owner can dispose of the evicted tenant's property without liability. A State Marshal would still be required to inventory the property to ensure all contents remained for 3 days. Property Management companies or owners could include a clause in their

lease stating that if a tenant were to be evicted then the tenant would have to remove all property within 3 days. This notice would also be added to all eviction notices delivered by State Marshalls. This would allow the tenant to be notified up to four times during the entire process thus giving them ample notice. Property management companies and owners would still take on the financial burden of disposing of the possessions, which can be costly and would also initially incur attorney fees to have their leases changed. Our association feels that this would be an adequate comprise.

A loss of three months' rent on even one apartment unit is a serious financial burden that can put property owners out of business. Removing the municipality and passing the costs of storing the property of evicted tenants for 30 days directly onto property management companies and owners would necessitate an increase in rental rates to cover these increased costs. This is not in the interest of apartment owners or their current paying tenants especially in this tough economic time.

Sincerely,

Tracy Arruda
CTAA Legislative Committee Member